

RECEIVED

H4C-PS-16

MAR 13 2006

P. 1 of 1



[Redacted]

03/07/2006 10:28 AM
PST

To: <YOSE_planning@nps.gov>
cc: <Mark_Fincher@nps.gov>, <Jeffrey_Trust@nps.gov>
Subject: Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade--Poopenaut Pass

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Hello:

Thanks for sending the announcement of the Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade proposed for Poopenaut Pass. I would have liked to attend the site visit on March 10 but will submit this brief comment instead for now.

At the location shown in the photo on page 2 of your 2/2006 announcement of the proposal, at the left side of the photo across from the pullout, there is an old trail leading to a cliff overlook with what may be the best overall view of the Hetch Hetchy area. The trail has not been maintained in many, many years and had not been maintained when I first saw it in the 60s. It is not an "official" NPS trail, but it may have been built by the City after the construction of the railroad grade into Hetch Hetchy for the building of the first dam about 1918 or so. It was probably used by the City to show visitors the dam, reservoir, and watershed, which is what it is so useful for now. There is no railing at the cliff edge view, and much of the trail has been dislodged or washed away. The general route of the trail is shown in black on the attached map section from the Ackerson Mountain 7.5' quad.

This old overlook is the best and most accessible general view from the ground of the Tuolumne watershed, affording nearly a 360 degree view of 1996 Ackerson Fire impacts, moraines, Tioga glaciation trimlines with Mt. Gibson and other nunataks, U-shaped vs. V-shaped river valleys, as well as the construction layouts for building and raising the dam. The overlook shows in a very graphic way how geography has shaped human use of this area. I've used this overlook many times and so have others. The overlook has been part of the Yosemite Road Guide at least since the 1973 edition, in which it is listed as H2. There is not much room for a new installation within the designated wilderness boundaries also shown on the attached map, but I hope those boundaries will be respected rather than altered or impaired. I hope this overlook and old trail will also be respected rather than impacted by the proposed installation.

[Redacted]



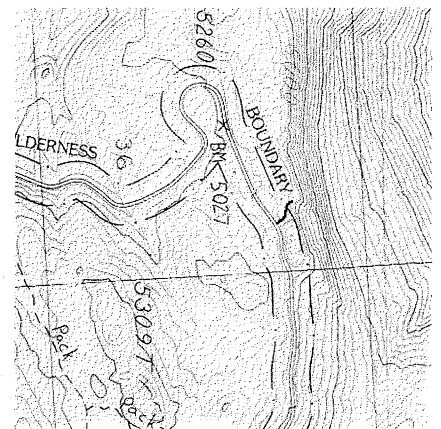
poopenaut pass.jpg No virus found in this outgoing message.

Checked by AVG Free Edition.

Version: 7.1.375 / Virus Database: 268.2.0/275 - Release Date: 3/6/2006

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attachment to
HHC - PS-16



RECEIVED

HHC-PS-19
MAR 21 2006

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

March 17, 2006

SUBJECT: HH Communications System Upgrade Project

Please let this letter speak for me (and many other Tuolumne County residents I know). We all consider ourselves supporters of the National Forests and Parks systems. We feel that in this day and age current communications technology is an absolute must. We are in favor of the upgrades suggested and would like the project to investigate one step further.

It would seem to be possible that the two Federal Agencies involved could also look into some type of partnership with private wireless phone services to add cell phone signal transmissions to one or more of the towers in question. That whole huge area is a cell phone dead spot. If I remember correctly, wireless companies are willing to pay lease fees to be able to add their equipment to towers owned by others. This might even help pay for the upgrade project.


Many a time I have been at Camp Mather and had to stand in line for an hour at one of the three pay phones there to make an important call. In addition, I have used the road system in that area extensively and cell phone service would be an added benefit for vehicle breakdown or other type emergency.

It also seems like the Federal Government has been making an effort to partnership up with private enterprise to make things more efficient and cost less. If rules or laws need to be amended, can we at least try?

I would also like to request a CD ROM copy of the Draft IS/EA when released.

Thanks for listening.

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 03/29/2006 11:51 AM
PST

To: [REDACTED]
cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: HETCH HETCHY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM UPGRADE

Here's a comment on the Microwave project that was emailed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Hetch Hetchy Program Manager
Office of the Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
[REDACTED]

RECEIVED
HHC-PS-24
MAR 30 2006
P. 10/2
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

----- [REDACTED] YOSE/NPS on 03/29/2006 11:50 AM -----



[REDACTED]
03/22/2006 05:13 PM
PST

[REDACTED]
cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: HETCH HETCHY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM UPGRADE

for you guys...

Linda Dahl, Chief of Planning
Yosemite National Park
P. O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389
209-372-0352
209-372-0220 FAX
linda_dahl@nps.gov

----- Forwarded by Linda Dahl/YOSE/NPS on 03/22/2006 05:13 PM -----

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[REDACTED]
03/21/2006 08:18 AM
PST

To: [REDACTED]
cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: HETCH HETCHY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM UPGRADE

I note in the PLANNING UPDATE which you folks send us, that scoping is open on the Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade. I'm not sure what that all means, but if it means a window is open for a bit of public comment I would like to do so.

Our extended family, all from the San Francisco Bay area, spends time each March in Yosemite Valley, and, with luck, a week at Tuolumne Meadows in July or August. We have been doing this for at least the past 15 years. Yosemite Park is very special to me and and has been since I was a teenager. (I'm now 82)

If it is a potential within the scope of this upgrade, please include in this upgrade a capacity to receive San Francisco's public radio station KQED

HHC-PS-24
p. 2 of 2

in the Valley and in Tuolumne Meadows. I would gladly exchange the television sets in the Yosemite Lodge units for such a capability.

Also, I note a small print reference in the Planning Update to the "sixth year of litigation" relative to the Revised Merced River Plan. I should like to know what the issues are currently relative to this litigation.

I appreciate receiving the PLANNING UPDATE.

[REDACTED]



03/23/2006 01:31 PM
PST

To: <YOSE_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Hetch Hetchy Communication System

RECEIVED
HHC-PS-25
MAR 30 2006
p. 1 of 1
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Superintendent Tolefson:

Hetch-Hetchy, as it is now, is far too underused. As you know it potentially as rich a public resource as the valley itself, and some day, in the distant future, it WILL be used for what it was intended, when it was set aside.

In the mean time what to do:

Firstly, I highly encourage you to fight not to let this come out of your park budget. Particularly, DO NOT let this come from the monies for the Interpretive program, which is bare bones as it is!

If this project is going to occur, It should be solely funded by Hetch-Hetchy Water and Power and/or the Defense Department.

Secondly, I would encourage you to take a long term protective roll for the park and, in particular, for the restoration of the Hetch-Hetchy Valley. Someone within the park service has got to speak up!

I dearly miss the River Campground with many fond family memories. The Park Service, nonetheless, has done a great job of sticking up for that area and letting it slowly grow back to a riparian forest. I would encourage you to take a similar position on Hetch-Hetchy.

It's regrettable that, in these times, the Park Service has to be involved in the protection of a STRATEGIC resource, which shouldn't be in the park in the first place.

Anyway, make the impact as low as can be done, but I'm not sure the Park Service can, or will, say NO!

Best Regards in Nature,

[Redacted signature block]

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03/27/2006 04:00 PM
PST

To: YOSE_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project

RECEIVED
HHC-PS-26
MAR 30 2006
p. 106 3
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

March 27, 2006

Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
ATTN: Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389
YOSE_planning@nps.gov

RE: Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project

Dear Yosemite Planners,

Our center recognizes the need to modernize the Hetch Hetchy Communications System. However, in upgrading the system, we urge the Park, the Stanislaus National Forest, and Hetch Hetchy Water and Power, to protect the scenic beauty and biological values of our public lands, especially those within Yosemite National Park or within adjacent wildland areas.

We realize that selecting the locations for the communications facilities is dependent on line-of-site requirements that necessitate the use of exposed and elevated sites. We are concerned with the visual impacts this may cause to otherwise wild and scenic vistas. In preparation for selecting sites and designing facilities, we recommend that, at the very least, a GIS based "view-shed" analysis should be conducted to determine and minimize the impacts to aesthetic values and wild landscape vistas. A ground-based view-shed analysis utilizing

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simple mock-ups of proposed facilities would allow planners and the public a chance to visualize potential impacts to scenic vistas. Prior to any final decision on this matter, we believe it would be prudent and sensitive for the public agencies to disseminate "photo-visualizations" to the members of the public who express interest in this issue. Once the agencies have received public feedback on the photo-visualizations, the agencies would have a better sense of how controversial or non-controversial a particular site may be. Accordingly, CSERC asks for this additional opportunity for information sharing and feedback prior to a final decision as to siting and design for communications facilities.

Finally, we ask that qualified biologists conduct appropriate and thorough plant and animal surveys for special status or T&E species at proposed communication facility sites prior to any approval. If at-risk species are found to occur at proposed sites, we ask that they are avoided and protected or that fully appropriate mitigation measures be made a condition of approval.

Please feel free to call (██████████) or e-mail (██████████) if you have any questions on this matter.
Sincerely,

████████████████████
████████████████████

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████████████████████
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Yosemite National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Public Comment Form

HHC-PS-27
MAR 30 2006
P. 1 of 1

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

All interested individuals, organizations, and agencies are invited to provide written comments or suggestions during public review of any project. Please submit written comments to: **Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, P. O. Box 577, Yosemite, CA 95389 (Attn: <Name of Project>)**. Written comments may also be faxed to: **(209) 379-1294**. Electronic comments may be transmitted to: **yose_planning@nps.gov** (in the subject line type: **<Name of Project>**).

Note: Anonymous comments will not be considered. If you do not want your name or/and address to be subject to public disclosure, please state that at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowable by law. Generally, National Park Service will make available to public inspection all submissions from organizations or businesses and from persons identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses.

Project Name: Hetch-Hetchy Communication System - Upgrade
(Please use a separate form or sheet of paper for each project you are commenting on)

Name: [REDACTED]

Date of Comment: 3/24/06

Address: [REDACTED]

COMMENTS

I agree an update is sorely needed
and I think the proposed one is fine

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(Continue comments on back of page)



03/29/2006 10:35 AM
PST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: scoping comments

RECEIVED
HHC-PS-~~1072~~ 28
MAR 30 2006
p. 1072
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Public Scoping
Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95398

March 29, 2006

Dear Sir:

The site visit organized by NPS staff, Timberline Engineering and others
On March 26th to inform concerned citizens of the proposed communications system at Poopenaut Pass was well organized and provided the necessary background for informed public comment. Hopefully, ideas developed through this process will help minimize impacts of the microwave structure on the visual quality of YNP.

Of the eight locations under consideration only one, listed under alternative number 7, seems acceptable. The others should be rejected for one or more reasons due to visual impacts on view sheds, site limitations, reasonable proximity to road and turnouts or wilderness encroachment.

Points to consider assuming site 7 is selected.

1. Construct a 12 X 24 foot equipment and battery shelter with field rock (granite) common to the Poopenaut Pass area. Materials should be acquired outside Park boundary to minimize site disturbance. Roofing should be constructed with natural appearing materials, i.e. a tile, shake like in appearance with a color similar to the granite surroundings. A metal roof would not be appropriate. Cover microwave drums with material emulating lichens covered granite.
2. Site 40-foot tower in front of (approximately N.E.) existing yellow pine at proposed site. Utilizing the yellow pine as a backdrop to the tower and drums will significantly minimize the visual impacts of the structure, especially from the Hetchy Road and wilderness to the east. High priority should be given to this effort.
3. The tower could be either a pole or lattice structure. The selection should be based on the best alternative to insure preservation of the yellow pine as a mitigating backdrop to the new tower.

Thanks for listening,

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03/28/2006 10:43 PM
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To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Hetch Hetchy communications System upgrade

RECEIVED
HHC-PS-29
MAR 30 2006
P.1031
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Comments on the Hetch Hetchy communications System upgrade.

Do what is necessary and stop wasting taxpayer money on these ridiculous environmental evaluations.

[REDACTED]

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RSVP for site visit within Yosemite National Park, March 10, 2006

RECEIVED

- ☐ Attending site visit on March 10*, 2006, with ___ person(s). *HHC-PS-30*
Please send me more information about the site visit. *APR 04 2006*
*(In case of snow or rain, the site visit will be held on March 17, 2006.) *P-1281*

Request copy of draft IS/EA: When it is released in the Wilderness, please send me a ☒ printed copy or ☐ CD ROM of the

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project Draft Initial Study (IS) / Environmental Assessment (EA)

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Please print:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

email address: _____

Preferred method of contact:

☒ Mail

☐ Email

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HHC-PS-31

APR 17 2006

P. 1062



04/10/2006 08:17 PM
AST

To: [REDACTED]
cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Attn: SFPUC Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project

April 10, 2006

Michael Tollefson
Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA. 95389

Attn: SFPUC Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project

Dear Mr. Tollefson,

This letter is in response to your public comment period for the Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project.

The National Parks Conservation Association is America's only private, non-profit advocacy organization dedicated solely to protecting, preserving and enhancing the National Park System. NPCA was founded in 1919 and has more than 300,000 members and supporters.

After careful review of the communications tower siting possibilities in the Poopenaut Pass area, we find "Alternative Seven" as the most desirable. This alternative meets the six criteria set forth by Hetch Hetchy Water & Power and the National Park Service:

- o Be located outside of Yosemite National Park Wilderness Area
- o Have line-of-sight visibility to O'Shaughnessy Dam and communication
- o Have limited visibility from locations viewed by the public
- o Be relatively close to an existing electrical distribution line to avoid the need
- o Be close to an existing road and turnout to allow for easy maintenance access
- o Be large enough for a communications tower and equipment shelter

We also believe that at 40' in height, this tower will be less intrusive to the environment and the least aesthetically displeasing to visitors. With that said, we have serious concerns with the construction of Alternative Seven and the other proposed tower possibilities that we elaborate on below.

1. TOWER DESIGN

Choose a tower/pole design that will be the most aesthetically pleasing to area.

For example:

The design of the tower should be one that will naturally camouflage itself with its natural surroundings. At first glance, the monopole "tree look-a-like" design seems like the logical choice to have in a natural landscape. However, this tower would need to be designed to match the surrounding ecosystem (e.g.: a Redwood does not blend well with a Black Oak, Ponderosa Pine, or other trees native to the Hetch Hetchy area)

Suggestion:

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The tower design should be evaluated as to how it will look from several view points (e.g.: various stops along Hetch Hetchy road, O'Shaughnessy Dam, or other popular visitor look-out points in the valley). The goal is to have a tower that will "blend" as much as possible. Therefore, if HH W & P and NPS choose the monopole or lattice style tower, we suggest that the tower be painted a color that best reflects the color of its surrounding environment and the antenna drums be the same color. If the "tree" style tower is chosen, we suggest researching and designing the tower to resemble a native species to the area.

2. OTHER TOWER LOCATION POSSIBILITIES

The other seven proposed tower locations are not logical in terms of construction and obstruction of view.

For example:

In evaluating each tower siting possibility, Alternative One seems the least appealing, as it is in plan view from Hetch Hetchy road while traveling toward O'Shaughnessy Dam—at a towering height of 260 feet, this tower is a true eye-sore. Alternatives Two and Three are also poor choices for construction, as they do not allow easy access for maintenance needs. Alternative Four is very visible from Hetch Hetchy Road while traveling toward the dam, and therefore, inhibits visitor experience. Alternative Five, while on the east side of Hetch Hetchy Road, is still plainly visible from the roadside. Alternative Six also fails with high visibility, plus, building a tower at Alternative Six would remove a major turnout along Hetch Hetchy Road—thus further tarnishing visitor experience by eliminating parking opportunities. Alternate Eight, while the closest to ideal (smaller tower that is not visually intrusive to visitors) fails on account that it is situated within NPS wilderness area.

Suggestion: As stated above, Alternative Seven—though partially visible from Hetch Hetchy Road—is the best alternative for a tower location. With great care taken to build an aesthetically pleasing tower, we believe that this location will have minimal impact to visitor experience—while providing the necessary communication system to ensure the safety of visitors and San Francisco's water supply.

Thank you, Mr. Tollefson, and the staff and management of the National Park Service, Hetch Hetchy Water & Power and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, for the opportunity to comment on this planning process. Additionally, I'd like to thank you for the invitation to the site survey held on March 23. The opportunity to participate in the survey is greatly appreciated, as the survey significantly impacted my comments above. Please feel free to contact our organization with any questions.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]



04/11/2006 12:42 AM
AST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Hetch Hetchy Communications Project

RECEIVED
HHC-PS-32
APR 17 2006
P. 1 of 2
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

10 April 2006

Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
ATTN: SFPUC Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Fax: 209/379-1294

This is being e-mailed to: yose_planning@nps.gov

Sir:

The following comments are submitted on behalf of the Sierra Club. Thank you for this opportunity to make suggestions which hopefully will be of use to you in your efforts to protect the visitor experience and the natural resources of Yosemite National Park.

These are scoping comments intended to identify issues which we believe your planning processes should address for the SFPUC Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project.

You need to clarify what the nature of the existing communications system is, and what the nature of its proposed replacement is. Several different terms are being used. "Radio", "fiberoptic", and "microwave" seem to be used interchangeably. But it is our understanding that these terms normally are used to refer to totally different technologies.

What technology is being used at present? Why is that technology now deemed unsatisfactory?

What technology is being proposed?

What alternative technologies were considered and rejected? Why were they rejected?

In other words, we are wondering about the basic premise on which this project is founded: The present system is said to be unacceptable, and we are told that there is only one alternative. But there is no explanation. Apparently we are supposed to take it on faith.

Where is the analysis of alternatives at the stage when it really matters--determining what type of system to use?

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Different systems clearly would have different impacts, and an analysis of those impacts should help to guide the selection of the best system. The information needs to be presented so the public can consider it and make useful comments.

Instead, the architects have already designed the basic house, and now we are being consulted for our opinion regarding the curtains.

This is not a valid NEPA process.

If there is to be a tower for one type of technology, what assurance is there that other types of antennae will not be mounted on the same tower? Expanding cell phone coverage into designated Wilderness would profoundly degrade Wilderness quality. Such an action would have a major impact on the visitor experience, and clearly would call for a full EIS. There needs to be some guarantee that a Hetch Hetchy communications system would not set the stage for the other abomination.

Thank you for seeking public input on the SFPUC Hetch Hetchy Communications System Upgrade Project. We hope you find our comments to be useful, and that you take them into account.


Sierra Club's Yosemite Committee

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<http://mail.netscape.com>

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HHC-PS-33

APR 17 2006

p. 1 of 1

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

April 10, 2006

Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
 P.O. Box 577
 Yosemite, Ca 95389

ATTN: Hetch Hetchy Communications
 Upgrade Project

I attended the March 23, 2006 meeting at the Poopenaut Pass turnout and was impressed at the presentation given by the National Park Service employees.

In my opinion, the most practical site for the micro tower and building would be site #6 as it is next to the road where power is easily accessible and construction costs would be minimal.

The downside of site #6 is that the existing turnout would have to be expanded or changed to a new location.

The building and tower, which would be in public view, would be no more obtrusive than the existing power poles on Evergreen Road.

I do oppose site #1 which would BE too visible and strictly out of place as it would be viewed all around the hairpin turn.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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